



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Joan McAlpine  
Convener  
Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

15 May 2020  
ID/km

Dear Convener

**On behalf of Screen Scotland, I write in response to the Committee's letter of 26 March 2020, in which you request additional information to follow on from the oral evidence provided by David Smith and myself on 12 March 2020.**

The responses to each of your information requests are detailed below.

Key Performance Indicators in relation to Studio and Build Space

As you indicate in your letter of 26<sup>th</sup> March, **Section 4.8 of Screen Scotland's Business Plan** includes a KPI to have a new studio facility refurbished and open by April 2020. We agreed to write to the Committee setting out in more detail the performance indicators which sit below this:

- Additional Scottish spend generated by studio productions;
- Additional direct employment (full time equivalent) generated by studio productions;
- Additional GVA generated by studio activity
- Number and value of international productions/co-productions produced in the studio;
- Number of Scotland based trainees engaged by studio productions
- Reporting on destination of trainees **at studio productions, such as 'where are they now' reporting five years on.**

Screen Scotland response to stakeholder evidence

### The Role of Producers

In the preceding evidence session on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, panellist, producer Barbara Orton, indicated she was **concerned about what she perceived as a lack of "good-quality, market ready projects..."**, and asked what Screen Scotland was doing to, **"broker them [such projects] into the international marketplace, the domestic marketplace or any marketplace...?"**.

**It is not Screen Scotland's role to develop, market or produce new projects directly. This is the role of the film or television producer, although Screen Scotland's**

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interventions support the work of producers. Scotland has many highly successful producers across film and television, in both scripted and unscripted. They regularly devise, develop and produce good-quality market ready productions often with the support of Screen Scotland. Our written evidence to the Committee dated 28<sup>th</sup> February provided multiple examples of successful projects supported by Screen Scotland and delivered to the market by producers based in Scotland.

### Market Access

**In Ms. Orton's area of activity, international documentary, we support producers to access markets individually and via our support for the Scottish Documentary Institute (SDI).**

SDI offers practical support and professional development to documentary filmmakers **at all levels of their career on an ongoing basis and with Screen Scotland's support** SDI has delivered a programme of events across the last two years under the title *Docscene*. This comprehensive training and development programme for documentary producers includes:

1. short film training for development and production under the banner, *Bridging the Gap*;
2. a market session, *The Edinburgh Pitch*, at the Edinburgh International Film Festival – where international commissioners are introduced to Scotland based documentary producers and their projects;
3. regular consultancy sessions to develop, strategize and broker documentary features; and
4. supported delegations from emerging to established Scotland-based producers to **attend international documentary markets, including Sheffield Doc Fest's MeetMarket, the International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam, Toronto's annual Hotdocs market and CPH Dox in Copenhagen.**

We can and do support producers to prepare for and participate in these events so that they have the best chance at market, but it is their responsibility to devise and develop projects and to make and close the deals that lead to production.

**In addition to our work with SDI, Screen Scotland's support for individual producers is** facilitated through our Markets & Festivals fund, which in normal times supports the attendance by Scottish based talent at events, markets and festivals around the world. In the last two years Ms. Orton herself has been supported by Screen Scotland directly to attend the international Documentary Festival of Amsterdam on two occasions; Sunnyside of the Doc in La Rochelle, France; Sheffield Doc Fest; and the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary, twice.

### Co-Production

As well as supporting producers to prepare for and attend international markets and festivals, Screen Scotland works to bring potential co-production partners to Scotland. Before restrictions were imposed on travel and work in response to the Covid-19 **outbreak, Screen Scotland was to host the ACE producer's network in Edinburgh and Fife** at the start of April 2020. This event would have enabled 20 Scotland-based producers to participate in learning and networking opportunities with around 200 of **Europe's most experienced producers. ACE exists to encourage and enable** international co-productions. Its training asserts the position and unique responsibilities of the producer throughout the whole process of **a project's** development, production, marketing and delivery to audiences. This would have been

the first time the ACE Reunion had been held in the UK and the intention is that it will now be held in Scotland next year instead.

### High Growth Strategy

Several panellists in the 5<sup>th</sup> March evidence session, raised concerns that Screen Scotland placed too great an emphasis on “high growth potential”. In our own evidence session with the Committee the following week we confirmed that Screen Scotland is tasked with increasing the size of the Scottish Screen sector as a whole. Growth for individual production companies and producers is undeniably important, but it is neither our sole focus nor the dominant focus of our activity in many aspects of the Scottish screen sector.

As the preceding paragraphs of this response indicate, we support activity across **stages in people’s careers and where growth in turnover is not necessarily the** immediate or primary aim. For example, Screen Scotland supports GMAC in Glasgow to deliver various aspects of their work including the *Little Pictures* initiative. *Little Pictures* is a new micro-budget commissioning scheme for people from under-represented groups with little or no filmmaking experience. It aims to develop the progression of filmmaking talent from under-represented groups in Scotland. With SDI and BBC Scotland we have delivered the innovative television documentary production initiative, *Right Here*. This talent initiative offers Scotland-based filmmakers an opportunity to create a 30-minute creative documentary for broadcast on TV. The initiative is for two years, and six filmmakers will secure their first broadcast commission and see their work air on BBC Scotland and on the iPlayer across the UK. *Right Here* is aimed at people who are currently under-represented in TV including: women; people with a disability; BAME individuals; people from the LGBTQ community; and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our strategy for growth is underpinned by our primary funding routes for film and television producers based in Scotland, which are the Film Development and Production Fund and the Broadcast Content Fund. Across 2018/19 and 2019/20 we made awards via these funds to a wide range of companies at various stages of development, with 134 awards to companies with less than £1m of annual turnover, eight to companies with turnover between £1m and £5m and three to companies with turnover in excess of £5m.

In summary, we seek growth and development of the sector and of individuals within the sector at all levels. High growth is an aim but not the only aim. The majority of our awards are granted to smaller companies.

### Support for Producers in Scotland

During the previous evidence session on 5<sup>th</sup> March, producer Eric Coulter raised a concern regarding the balance of support offered by Screen Scotland between what he **referred to as “indigenous” production and the work of incoming investors.** Arabella Page-Croft echoed this concern.

Our written evidence dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 details the broad range of productions supported by Screen Scotland across 2018/19 and 2019/20. In our evidence before the Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> March, we confirmed that the Production Growth Fund is the only Screen Scotland funding route aimed specifically at inward investment opportunities and that it accounts for 10% of our annual budget. Additional analysis of our awards across the periods 2018/19 and 2019/20 confirms that of the 76 awards made under the three funds - the Production Growth Fund, the Film Development & Production Fund and the Broadcast Content Fund - in 2018/19 there

were 67 awards to companies registered in Scotland, nine to companies registered elsewhere. In 2019/20 we made 83 awards across those same three funds; 74 to companies based in Scotland, nine to companies registered elsewhere. The **overwhelming majority of Screen Scotland’s support and funding is focused on Scotland-based producers.**

A recent example of this is Ms. Page-**Croft’s company, Black Camel. During the** evidence session on 5<sup>th</sup> March Ms. Croft told the Committee that Black Camel had recently secured a new commission alongside fellow panellist, Bob Last. She noted **that,** *“The issue that is arising for so many producers in Scotland is that, although we have this new channel, there is no money. For example, I have just done a £4 million deal with Sky on another series that Bob Last and I are working on, but my current deal with BBC Scotland is for £100,000. Producers are having to go elsewhere, because the money is not here.”* **Whilst** this comment was primarily directed at the levels of funding allocated by the BBC to the new BBC Scotland channel, Ms. Page-**Croft’s account of her experience did not detail that the £4m Sky commission was** supported by a development funding award from Screen Scotland of £50,000 and that the production budget of £4million includes £500,000 worth of support from Screen **Scotland’s Broadcast Content Fund. Screen Scotland’s support of an entrepreneurial** producer who, through the production of ambitious, returnable series, will deliver a high number of jobs to our sector across the coming years.

#### Training and Development

During the session on 5<sup>th</sup> **March Ms. Orton reflected that,** *“The one-stop shop approach seems to have been interpreted as having a website that gives information. That falls short of the recommendations that were made in that June 2018 report. The call in that report was for all sorts of support, such as trainee schemes, mentoring and professional courses, which would go across the industry, from high-end companies to small production companies and from facility companies to craft skills development. It would be great to see **that.**”*

Screen Scotland works with a range of partners – including the Screen Scotland partners - across the sector to deliver training, skills and craft development work at all levels of experience. The following table details the range of schemes and courses **delivered in Scotland with Screen Scotland’s support across 2018/19 and 2019/20.**

18/19
BECTU Drama Training
GMAC Programme 2018-2019
Outlander Series 5 Training programme
Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme Scotland 2019
Screen NETS 2019
BBC Scotland Youth Digital Drama project
TRC DEEP - Includes 'RAD' diversity training pilot programme
19/20
BBC Introducing: Now & Next
BBC Scotland Sitcom Pilot Project
Screen Scotland / BBC MOU NFTS Support
BBC Scotland Scottish Drama Writers Programme 2019/2020
BFI Doc Society and Screen Scotland Edit Lab

Canada Media Fund / HIE Broadcast Development Fund
BECTU Drama Training Programme 2019-21
GMAC Film 2020
LUX Scotland Year-Round Programme
Move Summit 2020
Outlander Series 6 Training programme
Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme Scotland 2020
RAD 2020
Screen NETS 2020
Screen Skills: Series Producer Development

**The development of Scotland's screen workforce is essential to meet the industry's** growth, and to increase its diversity so, in addition to these courses and schemes, Screen Scotland supports the continuous professional development of the screen sector via our Professional Development Fund. This enables screen practitioners working in film and television to access training, mentoring and other professional development activity, nationally and internationally. Priority is given to development activities in areas of skills shortages and to applicants under-represented in the screen industries.

The Guidelines for the Professional Development Fund can be accessed via [www.screen.scot](http://www.screen.scot).

#### Cinema Equipment Fund

The Committee requested additional information regarding the recipients and geographical spread of funding from the Cinema Equipment Fund. The fund awarded 51 projects to the amount of £1,500,380. Screen Scotland received applications from **27 of Scotland's 32 local authority** areas, one of which was subsequently withdraw. **The resultant awards span 26 of Scotland's 32 local authorities.**

The Fund particularly prioritised applicants that that are located in areas of low cinema provision, including projects in Aberdeenshire, Angus, East Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, Midlothian, North Ayrshire. Awards were made to a cross section of projects including cinemas, theatres, arts centres community projects and festivals as well as for mobile touring kits to North East Arts and INDY Cinema that will support a network of cinemas in areas of low-provision across Scotland. Activities supported included replacing and upgrading equipment, improving the customer experience and strengthening the resilience of these venues for the future.

A complete awards listing will be supplied to the Committee by the end of June 2020, following the announcement of recipients under the third and final round of Cinema Equipment Fund applications.

#### Supporting Scotland-based screen industry through inward investment

You have requested additional information about the methods used by Screen Scotland to ensure major productions coming into Scotland are of maximum benefit to the local industry. As detailed in our evidence given during the oral evidence session **on 12 March in response to Annabelle Ewing MSP's question, the Production Growth Fund (PGF), our fund dedicated to inward investment opportunities (10% of our available budget in 2019/20) aims to help grow Scotland's screen production sector,** creating employment opportunities for Scottish crews, encouraging the use of production facilities, providing significant opportunities for the professional development, and delivering a direct and significant economic benefit to Scotland.

## Screen Scotland Annual Plan and Skills Strategy

**Screen Scotland's work on the Annual Plan and draft Skills Strategy has been paused** due to Covid-19. This is in recognition of the need for attention to be refocused on emergency measures and the need for strategic work to now take account of the vast impact of the pandemic. As a result, the next phase of strategy development will be progressed across the summer of 2020. We will provide an update to the Committee by the end of June 2020.

### Emergency Measures in response to Covid-19

**The Committee may be interested to hear more about Screen Scotland's work to support the sector through the impact of the pandemic.**

The Screen Scotland [Bridging Bursary Programme](#) and [Single Project Development Funding Routes](#) were instigated early in the lockdown period as an immediate response to the lockdown and its effect on the screen sector. We have received a high volume of Bursary applications (to 12<sup>th</sup> May Screen Scotland has assessed and made 464 Bursary applications, with an aggregate value of £947,833) and are now starting to process Single Project Development Funding applications from producers and production companies based in Scotland. This support for development - the viable and sustaining activity of producers, writers and other screen sector works at this time - has been widely welcomed by the sector.

Similarly, strategic coordination has also become a much larger part of our working week, as we engage directly across the sector, agencies and trade associations in Scotland and across the UK and with the governments at Holyrood and Westminster. **A key element of this work is Screen Scotland's participation in the work of the Screen Sector Task Force (SSTF)**, a pan-industry group coordinated by the BFI initially as a response to Brexit, now repurposed to respond to the pandemic and its implications. The SSTF has four working groups: Broadcasting & Production; Independent Film; Inward Investment; and Distribution & Exhibition. Screen Scotland is engaged in each of these and all four are currently focused on two primary activities, the drafting and agreement of safe-working protocols and guidelines and the question of insurance for activity that may be impacted by the pandemic. This work is on-going, and we are this week consulting with the Scottish sector on the current draft protocols for each of film/scripted and television.

### Memorandum of Understanding with Channel 4

The Memorandum of Understanding between Channel 4 and Screen Scotland remains under discussion and both parties have now agreed to work towards signature in August, 2020. The process of negotiation has been subject to delay due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

I can share with the Committee that negotiations around the MOU with Channel 4 have focussed on the following areas:

- Skills/talent development with a particular eye for diversity;
- Business development with an eye towards both growth in turn-over and sustainability; and
- Market development, to ensure there is a market for the content developed by the talented individuals and companies we invest our efforts/funding in.

## Screen Scotland Partnership working/Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Enterprise participates in the Screen Scotland partnership through active participation in the Screen Committee, the Partnership Delivery Group and the individual working groups that currently sit under the Partnership Delivery Group – the Skills Development Working Group and the Business Development Working Group. On a day-to-day basis we liaise with colleagues in Scottish Enterprise on areas of common activity. Current examples of this activity include our work towards a data sharing agreement and the continued development of the **findbusinesssupport.gov.scot portal**, **Screen Scotland/Creative Scotland's involvement** in the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund response to Covid-19, the ongoing review of the Digital Economy Expansion Programme (DEEP) and our work with each of the Enterprise partners to support individual screen businesses to grow and develop.

Derek McCrindle, Head of Place at Scottish Enterprise has recently joined the Screen Committee, the primary liaison group between the Scottish Screen partners. In response to your questions regarding Scottish Enterprises role in the partnership, Derek has provided the following response from Scottish Enterprise:

*Scottish Enterprise works closely with Screen Scotland both as a member of the Screen Scotland Partnership and in relation to providing business support to the screen sector. We are opportunity driven and demand led and fully committed to **jointly delivering Scotland's screen ambitions through the support and development of businesses and through ensuring the conditions for investment in Scotland are attractive to global investors.***

*Our Strategic Framework, which launched last year, sets out our ambitions to be more relevant to more businesses across Scotland, democratising our services and repurposing our current business model to expand our reach. In the past few months, we have been working with our people, different groups of business customers and other businesses who have never worked with us before, to develop and design new services. As a result of this, we are creating an integrated single service proposition that will be phased into the organization. These changes include making funding easier to access, simplifying the application process and making it more transparent*

*We will continue to work with companies across the screen sector as part of our broad portfolio of clients **from all of Scotland's growth sectors. Companies access support and guidance which help them to***

- build resilience and improve productivity*
- identify opportunities to grow and trade internationally*
- deliver innovation through their workforce or digital capabilities*
- access specialist funding advice and finance.*

*We have participated fully in the recently completed study (EKOS, Nov 2019) to identify a collaborative model for business support in the screen sector. This has highlighted a range of existing channels of support within the Scottish Enterprise portfolio which are being successfully utilised by ambitious screen companies. Alongside this, opportunities to engage with a broader range of companies have also been identified. With the Screen Scotland partners we are now taking forward the recommendations of the report which will see coordination of access for businesses to our business development support and expertise hand-in-hand with sector specific offerings and expertise from Screen Scotland and others.*

*The recent appointment of a business development lead within the Screen Scotland team provides the key link which will allow Scottish Enterprise and other partners to effectively coordinate business support. Already underway are actions which will enable data sharing through agreements across the partnership in order to jointly identify growth companies and also companies at risk. We are supporting the partnership to meet Scottish government aspirations of a simpler, one-door approach to access all business support. This is being enabled through the ongoing work to deliver [findbusinesssupport.gov.scot](https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot) (currently Beta stage), for full rollout later in 2020.*

*The platform will contain information on all business development support available to all companies – regardless of size or sector – in conjunction with industry specific advice and support, including screen. This aligns with our ambition to democratise business support. Using this digital route, driven by shared data, and backed up by business development experts in Scottish Enterprise and sector experts in Screen Scotland will ensure more Scottish companies are able to access the right information, at the right time in the right way for them.*

*Alongside this is our ongoing work and advice around infrastructure including the studio at port of Leith and associated wider place developments in support of this and **other projects. We will also support Scotland's ambitious screen sector and companies** through our work on Innovation Districts, for example in Glasgow and a range of initiatives throughout Scotland which are growing digital industries connected to the screen **sector, including within Dundee's gaming cluster.***

#### Screen Scotland Staffing

Finally, we can confirm that subsequent to the March evidence sessions, Screen Scotland has recently strengthened its support to the Scottish screen sector. Louise Acheson has been appointed to the role of Head of Business & Market Development and Sambrooke Scott became our Head of Audience Development. A priority for the **new Head of Business & Market Development is the completion of Screen Scotland's Business Development strategy.** Interviews will take place in late May for the Heads of Scripted, Unscripted and Production.

We would like to thank the Committee for its interest in Screen Scotland. It has provided us with important insights and perspectives which we continue to utilise in our ongoing work. We look forward to continuing to work with the Committee and would be happy to provide further input or clarity as required.

Your sincerely

Isabel Davis  
Executive Director